Theresa Williams October 16, 2010

Both Simi Linton and James Charlton discuss a hierarchical perspective that places the disabled population at a disadvantage and concurrently devalues their position and contribution to society. James Charlton contends that the oppression of the disabled community is due to the dominant society’s inaccurate beliefs, which relates to Linton’s theory in that she believes the medical community is forcing their definition of disability on society; this greatly affects the social perspective of people with disabilities. The use of the “r” word reflects these ideas by reinforcing the perspective that the disabled population is of lower value in society. The “r” word separates a whole segment of society, impacting both the public’s views of people with disabilities and their expectations for them. This disparaging word creates a negative self-image in those with disabilities and may foment a belief that disability means inability. Linton states that the disabled public should have a say in what language is used to describe them. The “r” word demeans and diminishes the role of the disabled community and suppresses their opportunities to be seen as equal. People with disabilities do not have the same ability to progress in their personal and social lives, which belies any notion of fairness or equality.